

## Nestle gets a B+ for chemistry

Food giant is awarded grade for efforts to remove a suspected toxin from products.

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A report on the use of the chemical bisphenol-A, a suspected toxin commonly found in soda cans and baby bottles, has given Nestle S.A. a B-plus for its effort to eliminate use of the chemical.

The report was commissioned by Green Century Capital Management and **As You Sow**, which encourage private investors to support only publicly-traded companies that favor safe materials, sustainable energy use and other environmental goals.

Nestle, a Swiss company with its U.S. headquarters in Glendale, fared better in the report than large retailers and manufacturers including Costco and Whole Foods, which earned a D grade. Food makers and distributors ConAgra, Heinz and Hain Celestial earned A's for disclosing to shareholders the dangers of bisphenol-A, or BPA, and seeking alternative materials.

BPA, a widely used chemical, is suspected of causing reproductive problems and developmental disabilities and is being studied by the Food and Drug Administration and similar agencies around the world.

Seven states have banned BPA use in baby bottles or other products, according to the report. An effort to ban BPA use in baby bottles passed in the California Assembly earlier this year, but failed in the state Senate.

The "Seeking Safer Packaging" report gave Nestle an A grade for its effort to phase out the use of BPA, but gave the company a B-plus on disclosure to shareholders regarding BPA's risk and a C on the company's efforts to find alternatives to the chemical.

In response to questions on the October report, Nestle declined to address its phase-out or other plans while emphasizing its focus on consumer health and safety.

"While its products are safe and comply with current regulations, as a global food manufacturer and marketer, Nestlé takes into consideration consumer preferences as well as attitudes concerning the use of certain materials," the company said. "In this context, Nestlé has a global program to evaluate the most suitable packaging solutions, which can include alternatives to Bisphenol A."

The survey went out to 26 companies, and found that, overall, firms are moving quickly to address public concerns about the chemical.

"Companies are actually moving faster than regulators in phasing out BPA from food and beverage packaging," Emily Stone of Green Century Capital Management said in a statement.

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